(a) the number of street children in the country, particularly in the metropolitan cities as on March 31, 1996;

(b) whether the Union Government have taken steps for the rehabilitation of street children and abolition of child begging and to save them from exploitation;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Union Government so far to implement the child related provisions of different Labour Laws in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) No National Survey has been attempted to ascertain the number of street children in the country. However, studies were sponsored in 1992, jointly by the Govt. and UNICEF in 8 cities of the country, namely Hyderabad, Bangalore, Indore, Mumbai, Madras, Kanpur, Calcutta and Delhi. According to these studies there were 1.10 lakh street children in Delhi and 0.40 lakh street children in Madras. Data regarding number of street children in other cities has not been indicated in the studies.

(b) and (c) The Govt. of India launched a scheme for welfare of Street Children during the 8th Five Year Plan. The Scheme is being implemented since 1993-94. Under this Scheme 90% grant-in-aid is provided to the Voluntary Organisations on the recommendations of the State Governments for the development of Street Children providing them nutritional support, preventive health care, counselling, protection against abuse and exploitation and literacy support.

There is no central law applicable in the whole country for prevention and control of beggary. At present 16 State Governments and 2 Union Territories have, however, enacted their own laws. In so far as child begging is concerned, the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986, which extends to the whole of India except the State of J&K, makes the employment of juveniles for begging a cognizable offence punishable with imprisonment and also liable to fine. To give effect to the various provisions of this Act, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Prevention and Control of Juvenile Social maladjustment is being implemented since 1986-87 to provide financial assistance to State Govts./U.Ts. Further, under the Central Sector scheme for Beggary Prevention, financial assistance is given to State Governments/Union Territories and eligible voluntary organisations for establishing work centres for providing technical education and vocational training to the beggars.

(d) The Ministry of Labour has taken several steps for elimination and rehabilitation of child labour. According to the National Child Labour Policy, 1987, the problem of child labour is being tackled through (i) Legislation (ii) General Development Programmes for the benefit of children and (iii) Implementation of National Child Labour Projects. A comprehensive law, namely the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 already exists to prohibit the employment of children in 7 occupations and 18 Processes. Government has taken a major programme for rehabilitation of about 2.00 million working children in hazardous occupations by the year 2002. So far 76 National Child Labour Projects have been sanctioned in the Child Labour endemic States to cover 1.5 lakh children through special schools, where they are provided non-formal educations, Vocational Training, Stipend, Nutrition, health checks etc. In addition, Voluntary agencies are also being financially assisted to the extent of 75% for taking up welfare projects for working children.

Scheduled Caste Status to Muslims

5537. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether 'All India Backward Muslim Morcha' has asked the Government to prove its "secular credentials" by scrapping Article 341 (3) of the Constitution which accorded Scheduled Caste status only to members belonging to the Hindu, Sikh and Budhist communities;

(b) if so, whether the Government has examined their view point ;

(c) if so, the Government's reaction to this proposal; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Goverment in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) In a representation dated 20.12.95 the All India Backward Muslim Morcha have sought, in respect of "Muslim Dalits", removal of the bar on persons professing religions other than Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism being deemed to be members of Scheduled Castes, on the ground that it discriminates against them. This bar is contained in the Orders specifying Scheduled Castes issued under Article 341 (1) of the Constitution, as amended to date under Article 341 (2).

(b) to (d) The matter is being examined.

[Translation]

Outstanding Amount Dues to Sugarcane Growers

5538. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH :
SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether despite High Court's orders and assurance made by P.M., the outstanding dues of sugarcane growers have not been cleared till date;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government are aware of the news report 'Flouting of HC orders on sugarcane dues set back to PM' published in 'Indian Express' dated August 8, 1996;

(d) if so, the facts reported therein; and

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) to (e) The Prime Minister reviewed on 29.6.96 and 3.7.96 the position relating to payment of cane arrears of about Rs. 900 crores to the cane growers. Since then all out efforts have been made by the Govt. of U.P. and the sugar factories there to clear the dues. As a result thereof, payment of Rs. 456.11 crores had already been made to the cane growers by 31.7.96.

As regards the news report in the Indian Express, New Delhi dated 8.8.96 saying inter-alia that the payment is being made by way of Indira Vikas Patras, the State Government has advised that instructions have already been issued not to make payments by way of Indira Vikas Patras.

[English]

Implementation of 15-Point Programme

5539. SHRI E. AHAMED :
SHRI CHITTA BASU :

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have since evaluated the implementation of the 15-point programme for the welfare of minorities in the various States;

(b) if so, the findings thereof along with the steps taken by the Union Government for the effective implementation of this programme in the States;

(c) whether the Government propose to review the programme in the context of the altered political situation in the country;

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this direction;

(e) whether the Government have since received any memorandum in this behalf from "Insaf Morcha" and "All India Milli Council"; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) No, Sir. However, the implementation of the 15-Point Programme is being monitored periodically on the basis of quarterly progress reports received from the States.

(b) In the absence of evaluation report of the Programme, there are no findings. However, broad conclusions arrived at on the basis of the above said monitoring by Union Govt. are as follows :—

(i) Review meetings at the level of Chief Minister or Chief Secretary level are not being held regularly. However, review at the level of District Collector/ District Magistrate are being held regularly.

(ii) Point Nos. 1 to 7 of the 15-Point programme relate to maintenance of communal harmony and prevention of communal riots including rehabilitation of riot victims. State Govts. have furnished Nil information in their reports.

(iii) State Govts. have nominated a member of minority community on Selection Boards for jobs in police and other Govt. organisations.

(iv) State Govts. have not furnished any data about flow of benefits to minorities under various State and Central Development programmes though they have reported that they are constantly reviewing so that fair share reaches to minority communities from these programmes.

(v) Minority Grievance Committees have been set up by the State Govts.

The steps taken for effective implementation of this programme in States include the following :–

(i) States have been asked to issue instructions for the speedy disbursement of ex-gratia amount to the victims of communal riots by authorising District Collectors to draw funds from the Treasury under TR-27

(ii) States were asked to explore the possibility of organising special physical training camps for the candidates belonging to minority communities so as to train them for preparing those to compete for jobs in police services.

(iii) District Collectors have been asked to identify and recommend reputed coaching institutions under the pre-examination coaching scheme implemented by the Central Govt. so that coaching facilities are made available to them in their proximity.

(iv) States have been asked to evolve a system of nodal officers to ensure the prompt submission of progress reports on the implementation of the programme to the Central Govt.

(v) Central Govt. had organised regional meetings at various State Headquarters to review the implementation of the 15-point Programme at the State level to inject more seriousness in the implementation of the programme.

(c) and (d) The proposal for the reformulation of the existing 15-point Programme is under the consideration